

2009 | 7-8



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

New Music Festival 2009

Dennis Patrick, coordinator

Wednesday, January 21, 2009
7:30 pm. Walter Hall. Free

STUDENT COMPOSER CONCERT

PROGRAM

Taylor Cook Quartet

Saxophones - Taylor Cook, Drums- Robin Claxton
Piano- Jack Bodkin, Bass- Mark Godfrey

- INTERMISSION -

Illusions

Mirror; Moon; Flowers; and Water
Rob MacDonald, guitar

Alchemist's Riddle

Tim Francom, vibraphone

Sappho de Mytiléne

Ariana Chris, mezzo-soprano
Susan Hoepfner, flute
Zhenya Yesmanovich, piano

Fuhong Shi

Kevin Lau

Constantine Caravassilis

08|09

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Notes and Biographies

Fuhong Shi studied composition with Dr. Jianping Tang and received a Bachelor's degree in composition at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 2000. She then earned a Master's degree in composition under Drs. John Celona and Dániel Péter Biró at the University of Victoria in 2005. In the fall of 2005, she began her doctoral studies with Professor Gary Kulesha at the University of Toronto. She has taken master classes with a number of world renowned composers and composition professors, such as Chen Yi, George Tsontakis, August Read Thomas, Chou Wen-Chung, Murray Schafer, Gilles Tremblay, James MacMillan, Salvatore Sciarrino, Michel Gonneville, Steve Reich, Qigang Chen, Su Xia, and Wenjing Guo.

She was the recipient of a number of awards at the sixth annual Taiwanese Symphony Orchestra Composition Contest in 1997, at the first annual Yanhuang Cup Composition Competition in 1998, and at the Traditional Music Composition Contest of the Tai Wan National Chinese Orchestra in 2002. She was a finalist in 2006 Tsang-Houei Hsu International Music Composition Award, the winner of 2007 Karen Kieser Prize in Canadian Music, and the Generation 2008 Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal+ Composer's Competition.

Fuhong has collaborated with numerous prominent orchestras and ensembles all over the world, including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, New Music Concerts, Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal+, Orchestre de la Francophonie Canadienn, Tai Wan Symphony Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra, Quatuor Bozzini, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, China Guangdong National Orchestra, Youth Chinese Music Orchestra of Beijing Central Conservatory of Music, Hua Xia Chinese National Orchestra of Beijing Chinese Conservatory, and Toca Loca. Some of the renowned conductors and musicians she has worked with are Robert Aitken, Bramwell Tovey, Jean-Philippe Tremblay, Véronique Lacroix, Sylvio Gualda, Alex Pauk, Clemens Merkel, Isabelle Bozzini, Gregory Oh, Rob MacDonald and Aiyun Huang.

Her compositions and interviews were performed and broadcast in the US, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Europe and Southeast Asia.

Illusions - One journey-passing through the Gobi desert. There is a river with abundant headwaters at the upper reaches. And later, finding that the water was an illusion—a mirage. If one kept seeking along the river in the direction of the source, one would disappear forever into the vastness of the Gobi desert. This experience inspired me. In truth, most of the time, our earnest longings and expectations, which are based on subjective imaginings and judgments, are like the illusion of water in the Gobi desert. A Buddhist proverb states “flowers in a mirror and moon on the water are both illusory.” What is the distance between yang and yin, reality and illusion, essence and appearance, substance and mirage? Why is it so difficult to distinguish between them?

This piece includes four movements: 1 Mirror; 2 Moon; 3 Flowers; and 4 Water.

Sincere, bold, and compelling performances of new solo and chamber repertoire are establishing **Rob MacDonald** as one of Canada's most exciting young guitarists. Solo recitals

have taken him to the USA, England, and Italy and he has performed alongside Soundstreams Canada, the Canadian Opera Company, Madawaska String Quartet, CONTACT Contemporary Ensemble, and Amadeus Choir. Rob holds performance degrees from the Glenn Gould School, the Peabody Conservatory, and has studied privately with guitar virtuoso, Matteo Mela, in Italy. His debut recording, featuring four world premieres and including the Madawaska String Quartet, will be released this Spring. With outstanding guitarist Tracy Anne Smith, his new project, ChromaDuo, will perform its debut concerts of contemporary repertoire in the 2009/10 season.

Kevin Lau's music has been commissioned and performed by various orchestras and ensembles, including the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, the Mississauga Symphony Orchestra, the University of Calgary Brass Choir, the Canadian Composers' Quartet, the Esprit Orchestra, the Georgian Bay Symphony, the Cecilia String Quartet, and the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra. He has written music for over a dozen films, including the feature documentary “UFOs: A Secret History,” which aired on the History Channel in 2008. Recently, he co-wrote the full-length orchestral score (with Canadian composer Ronald Royer) to “Gooby,” a Canadian children's feature film starring Eugene Levy and Robbie Coltrane. In 2007 Kevin co-founded the Sneak Peek Orchestra with conductor Victor Cheng, an orchestra comprised primarily of student musicians and emerging professionals from the University of Toronto. He is currently pursuing his DMA in music composition under the supervision of Christos Hatzis.

In the **Alchemist's Riddle**, the music follows a traditional template (fast-slow-fast), but one that is internally lacking in discrete sections. The absence of hard juxtapositions encouraged me, paradoxically, to include a variety of pitch classes, rhythmic ideas, and timbres, as an experiment in musical alchemy - the attempt to synthesize ‘gold’ (structural unity) from ‘common metals’ (the surface material.)

Constantine Caravassilis was born in Toronto and raised in a musical family in Pythagorion, a culturally vibrant township of Samos Island situated in the north-eastern part of the Aegean Sea. His playground as a young child was the ruins of the famed Polycrates Wall, Pythagoras' ancient theatre, the local orthodox monastery of Spiliani and the Eupalinian aqueduct.

At age six, a family friend presented Constantine with a gift: a baby violin and a first lesson. All playground activities have since then been abated.

Hailed as “the most important Hellenic-descent composer of his generation” (Jazz & Tzaz), commanding a “beyond the ordinary sense of musicality”, Constantine's music is “constantly charged with emotion and energy in a profoundly individual style” (R.C.M.).

He is the founder and past director of the traditional orchestra and chorus of the Multi-Branch Lyceum of Samos City (1995-1997), for which he wrote his first theatre score at age sixteen for a staging of Federico Garcia Lorca's *Blood*

Wedding.

Commissions have come from soloists, ensembles and organizations the world around. His catalogue of works includes seven concerti and several orchestral, chamber, vocal and electroacoustic works. His music has been performed in Germany, France, Denmark, the U.K. and Wales, Russia, Belarus, Sweden, Israel, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey and Japan as well as throughout Canada and the United States, in several well-known music centers, such as the Alte Oper Frankfurt, the Smolensk Philharmonic Hall, the Bunka-Kainan Hall in Tokyo, Round Tower in Copenhagen, La Chappelle de Bon Pasteur in Montreal, the Markham Theatre for the Performing Arts in Ontario, Jordan Hall in Boston, New Theatre in Cardiff, the Bösendorfer Artist Salon in New York City and the Rosslyn Hill in London.

Selected compositions and arrangements appear on the Marquis label and have been recorded and broadcast by WGBH Radio in the U.S., CBC Radio in Canada, BBC-3 in the U.K, TDK radio in Japan and CNN Turk in Turkey.

He has served as composer-in-residence with the Contemporary Opera Lab in Winnipeg, the Open Strings Festival in Lolland and Copenhagen, Denmark, the London Song Festival in Britain and is currently composer-in-residence with the Cantabile Chamber Singers in Toronto.

Under the auspices of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Trinity College, London, Constantine was recently awarded three gold medals, the highest honour of the Volos International Composition Competition. His piece *Apanthroposis* for solo flute and tape received the first prize at the 2006 Syrinx Flute Festival in Canada.

Constantine's most frequent collaborators are mezzo soprano Ariana Chris and the Parisian Caravassilis String Quartet.

Sappho de Mytilène

Often referred to as "the tenth Muse", in honour of her contributions to Greek poetry, Sappho was an ancient Greek poet whose work is centered on the use of intense emotions: Love, desire, longing, and of course, suffering. A romantic at large, Sappho sends off powerful, though often mutilated messages through her poignant pen, a quality that makes her work relevant even in the twenty-first century.

Most importantly, however, Sappho's poetry is a whole impenetrable school on its own, dedicated to the study of women in ancient Greece, a theme not often found in Greek literature. In this respect, her work is a remarkable source of the aspirations and needs, as well as the overall role of women in the ancient world.

In setting these texts to music, my aim has been to -as proximately as possible- musically reflect all that is potentially lost in the translation, both to modern Greek and to French: From the various colors to the overall piquancy of each segment, and from the enveloped intensity of several moments to the brilliancy found in combining several meanings in one single sentence. This song cycle is dedicated to women of all countries, particularly those where gender equality is not a non-existent phenomenon.

Greek-Canadian mezzo-soprano **Ariana Chris** is a graduate of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music as well as the Opera Division. Ms. Chris made her New York City Opera debut last season as Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and has been on the roster for several seasons including

their most recent production of *Antony and Cleopatra* at Carnegie Hall. This season debuted with Opera Francais de New York singing the role of Poldine in the US premiere of Kurt Weill's *Marie Galante* for which she received an excellent review in the New York Times. Fellow Canadians in the production were Isabel Bayrakdarian and conductor Yves Abel. She made her Santa Fe Opera debut as Junon in *Platee* and her French Opera debut as Dorabella for Angers Nantes Opera's *Così fan tutte*. She represented Greece in the prestigious Cardiff BBC Singer of the World competition as well as singing for the Athens 2004 Olympics. Other debuts have included Opera Hong Kong, Kentucky Opera, and Lake George Opera. Her apprenticeships include Montreal Opera with whom she toured as Carmen and Hansel as well singing the title role in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Santa Fe Opera where she covered Anne-Sofie von Otter as Carmen, and Joyce di Donato as Cendrillon. Ms. Chris commissioned "Sappho de Mytilène" last season for a performance with the In Recital Series.

Appreciated for her "complete fluency in all registers, well-controlled technique and beautiful tone" (Toronto Star), Canadian flutist **Susan Hoepfner** is in great demand as an international solo recitalist and chamber musician. Appearances include prestigious venues in Canada, Japan, France, Argentina, Portugal, England, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Mexico and the United States. She is also heralded by James Galway as "one of the best talents of her generation."

Susan Hoepfner is a musician of international renown; she has performed as a guest soloist with orchestras around the world, including the New York Chamber Orchestra, Takefu International Festival Orchestra in Japan, Lisbon Radio Orchestra, Orquesta de Camera in Buenos Aires, Northern Lights Music Festival Orchestra in Mexico, and the Sacramento Symphony. In Canada, she has performed with the Calgary Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Canadian Chamber Ensemble, Regina Symphony Orchestra, and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra. A true musical ambassador, Susan Hoepfner performed for the opening of the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo in 1991 and is slated to perform at the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City in March 2009.

Ms. Hoepfner is in demand as a recording artist as well. Her numerous recordings appear on EMI Classics, Grammophon AB BIS, JVC Victor, Marquis Classics, and King Record labels. Her most recent releases on the Marquis Classics label include *Fantaisie Française* and *Musique Chambre de Française*. Other artists Ms. Hoepfner has collaborated with in recording and recital include Anton Kuerti, Marc-André Hamelin, Robert Kortgaard, Lydia Wong, Beverley Johnston, Renée Fleming, Measha Brueggergosman, Ben Heppner, Richard Margison, and James Galway.

A graduate of The Juilliard School in New York, where she studied with Julius Baker, Ms. Hoepfner is now a member of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music where she is an active performer. Every summer, Ms. Hoepfner teaches at Domaine Forget in Charlevoix, Quebec as well as The Julius Baker Masterclass in New York. As a Canadian Yamaha Artist, she performs on an 18K Yamaha Flute and travels extensively throughout Canada giving masterclasses in universities and high schools.

Sappho de Mytilène

Music by Constantine Caravassilis

Texts by Sappho

Translation to Modern Greek by Odysseas Elytis

French translation by Veronique Perl

English translation: Neil Philip & Ariana Chris

I - Mon Chant

Mon chant est commencé
par des mots aériens
Aussi est-il caresse mélodieuse
à l'oreille
J'ai servi la beauté
N'est-il rien de plus grand
Que la grâce des Muses
qui leur pouvoir
Me donnèrent en me donnant le dire
Vrai aux demain oubliés
je crois
Qu'il sera bien quelqu'un
pour se souvenir de moi

II - Toujours Eros

Toujours toujours Eros
Eros mon tourment
Et le combattre le pourrai-je
Ma belle Atthis
Quand lui de ses venins
et de ses douceurs
Me paralyse le monstre !
Et à toi hélas
ma pensée est odieuse
À tire-d'aile je le sais tu fuis
Vers Andromède

III - Vierge

Je ne veux de l'abeille
ni de son miel
Que les soucis
et les vents cruels
Cinglent celui qui voulait m'outrager
Mais moi si infime
Je n'espère de mes bras
pouvoir toucher le ciel
Et vierge resterai
pour toute l'éternité

I – My Song

My song began
with ethereal words
And was a melodious caress
for the ear
I served beauty
There is nothing greater
Than the favour of the Muses
Who gave me their power
in giving me true words
Though tomorrows are forgetful,
I do believe
there will be someone
to remember me

II – Always Eros

Always always Eros
Eros my torment
how can I combat him
my beautiful Atthis
When with his venom
and sweetness
He paralyses me, the monster!
and for you alas,
my thought is hateful
on the wing I know you flee
Towards Andromeda

III - Virgin

I want neither the bee
nor it's honey
would that torments
and cruel winds
lash him who wished to outrage me
but I so minuscule
hold no hope with my
arms to touch the sky
and will remain a virgin
for all eternity

IV – Adonis

Ô Adonis puisse un suaire ruisselant
De mon cœur qui goutte à goutte se vide
Me renvoyer pour toujours le reflet
Du beau visage muet
mais des colombes
Le cœur tendre s'est pétrifié
Elles replièrent leurs ailes
Et de la nuit du sommeil
leurs yeux s'envoilerent

V - Messenger du Printemps

Rosignol
à la voix voluptueuse
messenger du printemps
D'Aphrodite servante lumineuse
Quand la lune apparut
dans toute sa plénitude
Les vierges faisaient la ronde
comme autour d'un autel
Telles les jeunes filles de Crète
qui dansant autour de l'autel adore
De leurs pieds délicats en cadence
foulaient la fine fleur
de l'herbe printanière.

IV - Adonis

Oh Adonis a streaming cloth
empties drop by drop on my heart
always returning the reflection
of the beautiful mute face
but the doves
tender hearts turned cold
they tucked up their wings
and sleep's night
veiled their eyes

V – Harbinger of Spring

Nightingale
with the voluptuous voice
harbinger of spring
servant of luminous Aphrodite
when the moon appears
in all its fullness
the virgins make a circle
as though around an altar
the young girls of Crete
that dance round the adored altar
their delicate feet in rhythm
Press the fine flowers
of spring grass